

Allegany College of Maryland's Social Media Guidelines and Procedures

Introduction

As social media has become a necessary and powerful marketing tool, it is essential to define and identify guidelines and procedures that will enable users to maximize this medium to its fullest extent. Social media provides college faculty and staff the ability to reach students before enrolling at the College, and while attending the College, as well as inform the public about ACM news and important events.

Currently, there are seven social networking sites being utilized by Allegany College of Maryland. They are as follows:

Facebook
Instagram
LinkedIn
Snapchat
TikTok
X (formerly known as Twitter)
YouTube

The following definitions are specific to those social media sites. The Public Relations and Marketing Office will continue to monitor and research social networking trends and make recommendations to join new networks, discontinue association with old networks, and/or modify these guidelines as deemed necessary. As the use of social media expands, posting by ACM employees to other social networking sites should follow the same guidelines as outlined in this document.

Facebook

Facebook is a social networking website that serves as a virtual community for users to create profiles, share information, and comment on others posts. Facebook posts incorporate both text and images and can be made on either desktop or mobile devices. Businesses can create a Facebook Page or Group. Facebook Fan and Group pages are defined and discussed below:

Facebook Fan Page

ACM's main Facebook page is: <https://www.facebook.com/alleganycollegeofmaryland>

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The “fan page” application on Facebook allows a business, organization, school or higher education institution to promote their brand, products, services, and events. A page is primarily a one-way broadcast from the business; however, fans can provide comments and send messages through Facebook Messenger. Live broadcasts are another feature of a fan page. Allegany College of Maryland has an established Facebook fan page, which is an open medium for anyone to join and does not require permission from college site administrators. The page provides students with up-to-date campus information and the opportunity to communicate with fan page administrators and other fan page users. The fan page serves as a hub, designed to point fans of the page to other ACM Facebook pages and groups, as well as share College-related events, services, news, academic programs and classes, community partnerships, etc. **Since this page serves as the official Allegany College of Maryland Facebook page, staff, faculty and administrators are asked to refrain from creating other Facebook fan pages related to Allegany College of Maryland unless permission is granted by the Public Relations and Marketing Office.** However, the establishment of Facebook groups is welcomed and encouraged (see guidelines below).

Employees or departments that wish to contribute information to the College fan page may do so, keeping the “Guidelines for Posting to Social Networks” (see below) in mind. All content – including photos and videos - must relate directly to college business, programs, and/or services. Content should not promote individual opinions or causes that are not directly related to college purposes. Submissions should be made by completing a Public Relations and Marketing Services form: <https://services.allegany.edu/pr/services-request-form/>

Facebook Groups

While a fan page generally represents official businesses and associations, groups tend to be less formal and target a specific audience. Faculty and staff are encouraged to initiate the creation of Facebook groups to provide a networking tool for students in a particular academic program, student club, alumni group, etc. All content should be short and written in active voice. The style and tone should be informal, direct, and student-oriented. Faculty or staff members, who elect to start a new group, are responsible for its ongoing maintenance. **Anyone electing to set up a group would need to initiate contact with the Public Relations and Marketing Office.** The Public Relations and Marketing Office will establish the group account. Creating a group will require selecting two group administrators as well as permitting access to the Public Relations and Marketing Office’s social media administrators. **Groups are required to post on a regular basis; preferably one time per week. Any group with inactivity of more than six months will be removed.**

For a full list of approved ACM Facebook pages and groups, please visit <https://www.allegany.edu/social-media/>

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Instagram

Instagram is a social networking application designed to share photos, short videos, and create polls. It's best used via a mobile app but can be accessed from a personal computer. Account users have a profile and news feed similar to Facebook or X (formerly known as Twitter). Once a post is made, it will appear in the organization or person's profile for other users who are following to see. Photos and videos can be shared from Instagram to other social media platforms. Instagram also offers "Live" broadcasts.

ACM has four Instagram accounts. They are:

<https://instagram.com/alleganycollegeofmd/> (Main College account)

<https://instagram.com/acmtrojans> (Athletics account)

<https://instagram.com/acmbedfordcountycampus> (Bedford County Campus)

<https://instagram.com/acmculinairecafeandcatering> (School of Hospitality Management and Culinary Arts/Culinaire Café/Catering by the Culinaire Café account)

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a social networking site designed as a tool to allow professionals to network and businesses to share career related news and available job opportunities. It focuses on career development and gives people a chance to connect with classmates, colleagues, and other professionals. ACM utilizes LinkedIn to promote college news, events, alumni stories, job openings, employee awards and recognition, and professional articles.

ACM has one LinkedIn account. It can be found at:

<https://www.linkedin.com/school/allegany-college-of-maryland/>

If you have information to share related to the categories above, please contact the Public Relations and Marketing Office by completing the Public Relations and Marketing Services Request Form: <https://services.allegany.edu/pr/services-request-form/>

Snapchat

Snapchat is a messaging application used from a mobile or tablet device to share photos and videos that are only available to be seen for a limited amount of time. A caption or GIFs can be added to the photo or video before sharing. When on the Cumberland or Bedford County campuses, a user can add the College's name to a photo or video if they have their filters turned on. A stream of photos or videos can be posted to create a "Story," which lasts for 24 hours.

ACM has one Snapchat account. The name of the account is ACMnow. To follow us on Snapchat, visit <https://www.snapchat.com/add/acmnow>.

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If you have a photo or video that you want snapped, please contact the Public Relations and Marketing Office by completing the Public Relations and Marketing Services Request Form: <https://services.allegany.edu/pr/services-request-form/>

TikTok

TikTok is a social media platform that lets users create, share, and discover short videos. Videos are enhanced by music snippets, sound effects, and filters.

ACM has one TikTok account. The name of the account is @alleganycollegeofmd.

If you have a Tik-Tok video idea, please contact the Public Relations and Marketing Office by completing the Public Relations and Marketing Services Request Form: <https://services.allegany.edu/pr/services-request-form/>

X (formerly known as Twitter)

X is a social networking and blogging service that enables its users to send and read text-based messages of up to 280 characters. These messages are known as "posts." X allows users to share ideas, activities, events, news and interests within their individual networks.

Allegany College of Maryland has three X accounts. The main ACM account is used for promotion of ACM events, student activities, important reminders, news, and social media contests. The account handle is @alleganycollgmd.

The second account is solely for media relations and sharing of news stories. The account handle is @ACMTrojansnews.

The third account has been established for all ACM athletics and can be found by the handle name @ACMTrojans. The Public Relations and Marketing Office will have ownership over all X accounts and have access to administer messages to those accounts. In addition, the ACM Athletics Office is granted administrator access to post content on the ACMTrojans account.

ACM's main account: <https://twitter.com/alleganycollgmd>
ACMTrojansnews can be found at <https://twitter.com/ACMTrojansnews>
ACMTrojans can be found at <https://twitter.com/ACMTrojans>

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Anyone interested in posting should contact the Public Relations and Marketing Office completing the Public Relations and Marketing Services Request Form: <https://services.allegany.edu/pr/services-request-form/>

YouTube

YouTube is described as a forum for people to connect, inform, and inspire others across the globe. It allows users to discover, watch, and share originally-created videos.

ACM has two YouTube channels. They are:

ACM's main account: theACMuTube, <https://www.youtube.com/user/theACMutube/videos>.
ACM's Athletics account: ACMTrojans, <https://www.youtube.com/@acmtrojans>

The College stores an assortment of videos on these channels. YouTube also offers the opportunity for live streaming.

Content and Maintenance Guidelines for Social Media Sites

Responsibility for administration of all social media sites resides with the Public Relations and Marketing Office. Individual departments and groups seeking to create a presence on social network sites must contact the Public Relations and Marketing Office. Groups and content must be approved and facilitated through them.

The following are guidelines for maintenance of ACM social media content:

- **Content:** As stated in [ACM's Social Media Principles](#), all content should be student-oriented, accurate, concise, sensitive to diverse audiences, and respectful to the College, its employees, students, and the community. No posts should be derogatory or offensive. To promote communication, users will be limited by the terms and conditions of each social media site, which establishes many guidelines in regards to language, posting of photographs, videos, and audio recordings, copyrighted material, and various other topics. Terms of service for each site are as follows:

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/terms.php>

Instagram: <https://help.instagram.com/478745558852511>

LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/legal/user-agreement?trk=hb_ft_userag

Snapchat: <https://www.snapchat.com/terms/>

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TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/legal/terms-of-service?lang=en>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/tos>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/t/terms>

Terms and conditions should be reviewed before submitting a group or post request to the Public Relations and Marketing Office.

- **Limitations:** The College's social media sites are not to be used for personal or monetary gain by fans/followers, students, faculty or staff. All content and posts are bound by the terms of use of the specific social networking site and ACM's Code of Student Conduct. Content submitted by individuals does not necessarily reflect the thoughts or opinions held by the College.
- **Maintenance responsibilities:** All College social media sites will be monitored by the Public Relations and Marketing Office to ensure accuracy, timeliness, and appropriateness of content. Because Facebook pages and groups are interactive tools, administrators should monitor their accounts closely in order to respond to user concerns and conduct. While it is possible for administrators to delete postings, the general guideline will be to avoid suppressing information in order to encourage open and honest communication.
- **Frequency:** The fan page and groups should be maintained regularly by the designated administrator(s) and be as current as possible. The more current the content, the more users will access the page. Dated material should be updated in a timely manner.

Guidelines for Posting to Social Networks

1. Be transparent and honest about your identity. If you choose to post information about Allegany College of Maryland, identify yourself as a faculty or staff member. Never hide your identity.
2. Be accurate and be sure to have all the facts before you post. Cite and link sources whenever possible. If you make an error, correct it quickly and visibly.
3. Be respectful when commenting or participating in a discussion. Be sure to contribute valuable, thoughtful, and constructive insights. As an employee, remember that you represent Allegany College of Maryland at all times.

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4. Make sure your posts are of interest to the readers. Self-promoting behavior is viewed negatively and can lead to sanctions from social media websites and interest groups.
5. Think before you post. There is no such thing as a “private” social media site. Search engines will pick up posts long after the publication date. Archival systems may save posts even when they are deleted. Remember that comments can be forwarded or screenshotted.
6. Maintain confidentiality. Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Allegany College of Maryland, its students, its alumni or your fellow colleagues. This would include, but not be limited to, phone numbers, mailing addresses, birth date, and email addresses. Exercise good ethical judgment and adhere to all College policies and federal laws.
7. Maintain good cybersecurity practices. Do not share login credentials, verify accounts before extending administrative privileges, be cautious of messages and links, and watch for, report, and remove any posts that qualify as “spam” or may be fraudulent.
8. Please ask for help. If you need assistance with using a social media application, are uncertain about how to best respond to a question or complaint, or need advice on how to handle a problematic situation, contact the Marketing and Alumni Specialist, Joshua Getz, at jgetz@allegany.edu or 301-784-5129, or the Director of Public Relations and Marketing, Shauna McQuade, smcquade@allegany.edu or 301-784-5154.

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